

What is claimed is:

1. A sole plate production method comprising the steps of heating a sole-plate substrate material made of thermoplastic resin, pressing said heated substrate material relative to a foot sole of a human to prepare a sole-plate substrate having a shape corresponding to a sole arch of said foot sole, and producing a sole plate using said obtained substrate, wherein:

said step of pressing the heated substrate material relative to the foot sole includes pushing in a portion of said substrate material corresponding to an apex of a lateral arch of said sole arch to allow said substrate to be formed with a convex portion corresponding to the apex of said lateral arch.

2. The sole plate production method as defined in claim 1, which further includes the step of providing a spatula having a convexly-curved end, wherein said step of pressing the heated substrate material relative to the foot sole includes bringing said end of said spatula into contact with the portion of said substrate material corresponding to an apex of a lateral arch of said sole arch to push in said portion so as to allow said substrate to be formed with a convex portion corresponding to the apex of said lateral arch.

3. The sole plate production method as defined in claim 1, which further includes the step of forming a slit in said convex portion of said substrate to extend in a longitudinal direction of said substrate and have an open end at a toe-side end of said substrate.

4. The sole plate production method as defined in claim 1, which further includes the step of attaching a depression forming member onto a long plantar ligament region of said sole arch before said step of pressing the heated substrate material relative to the foot sole, and then pressing the heated substrate material relative to the foot sole to allow said substrate to be formed with a depression corresponding to said depression forming member.

5. The sole plate production method as defined in claim 1, wherein said step of pressing the

heated substrate material relative to the foot sole includes pressing opposite side portions of said substrate material, respectively, onto opposite side regions of said foot sole to extend upward so as to allow said substrate to be formed with a pair of side supports.

6. The sole plate production method as defined in claim 5, wherein said side supports are formed in only a portion of said substrate which extends from a position corresponding to respective shafts of first and fifth metatarsal bones of the foot sole toward a heel end of said substrate.

7. The sole plate production method as defined in claim 5, which further includes the step of forming a notch in each of said side supports at a position closer to a toe-side end of said substrate relative to an immovable joint region of said foot sole.

8. The sole plate production method as defined in either one of claims 1 to 7, wherein said substrate material is pre-formed to have an outside dimension capable of being formed directly into a final shape of said substrate.